

OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE INSPECTOR GENERAL
FOR THE AGENCIES OF THE ILLINOIS GOVERNOR

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Illinois Fair Managers Who Solicited or Accepted Gifts Fined

EEC Orders Fair Managers to Pay Fines of \$5,000 and \$1,000

Chicago: First Deputy Inspector General Kristy Shores today discussed the results of the investigation by the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor (OEIG) into the solicitation and acceptance of gifts from State vendors at the DuQuoin and Illinois State Fairs. In a ruling issued on July 24, 2014 and made available today, the Executive Ethics Commission (EEC) found that DuQuoin Fair Manager **John Rednour, Jr.** improperly solicited a gift valued between \$4,000 and \$8,000 and that Illinois State Fair Manager **Amy Bliefnick** improperly accepted gifts from a fair vendor, both in violation of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

“The Ethics Act sets clear standards for what State employees may solicit and what they *may not* solicit or accept,” said Deputy Inspector General and Chief of the Springfield Division Laura Bautista, whose division led the investigation. “It is illegal to solicit or accept gifts of a certain value from a vendor, and our investigation revealed that both State employees violated the law in this regard.”

After conducting its investigation, the OEIG referred the matter to the Office of Illinois Attorney General (OAG) for prosecution. Assistant Attorney General Francis Neil MacDonald represented the OEIG before the EEC and subsequently filed a motion for summary judgment in this matter. In proceedings before the EEC, **John Rednour, Jr.** acknowledged that he had asked a State vendor for gifts worth between \$4,000 and \$8,000 in 2012 and Illinois State Fair Manager **Amy Bliefnick** acknowledged receiving gifts from a State vendor in varying amounts worth more than \$100 each year.

The EEC levied a \$5,000 fine against **John Rednour, Jr.**, which in this instance is the maximum fine available. In its decision, the EEC also noted that **Mr. Rednour** agreed to not seek or accept State employment for five years from the date of the EEC’s final decision. The EEC also levied a \$1,000 fine against **Amy Bliefnick**.

About the Office of Executive Inspector General for Agencies under the Illinois Governor:

The OEIG was created by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430). The OEIG receives, evaluates, and investigates allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, misconduct, and violations of the Ethics Act, the 1990 US Supreme Court *Rutan* ruling, and other laws. Please visit our website at: www.inspectorgeneral.illinois.gov.